Minister has announced in the Union Budget 2007-08 that the Mid-Day Meal Scheme will be extended to cover children in Upper Primary Classes in 3427 Educationally Backwards Blocks (EBBs) in 2007-08. A budget provision of Rs. 7324 crores has been made for the MDM Scheme for the year 2007-08.

Lack of higher educational facilities in the North-East Region

†1354. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that students from North Eastern States have to seek higher education in other States of the country due to lack of availability of required facilities of the said education;

(b) if so, whether Government are formulating any scheme to develop facilities for higher education in North Eastern States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Students from North Eastern States have the option to pursue higher education in other States of the country. It is not clear that they do so because the required facilities are not available in the North Eastern States.

(b) and (c) There are already six Central Universities in the North Eastern States and legislation has been enacted for the establishment of three more. North Eastern Regional Institute of Science & Technology (NERIST), Itanagar, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) in Silchar, Assam and Agartala, Tripura are also looking after the needs of higher education in the North East. A proposal to set up an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Shillong has been approved. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has provided funds to Central Universities in North Eastern Region to set up faculties of Management and Engineering during the Tenth Plan period.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The UGC has proposed a new scheme for establishment of faculties of medical studies in all Central Universities of North Eastern during Eleventh Plan period subject to the availability of funds.

Coverage of Schools under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

1355. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme launched in 2001-02 had envisioned bridging of all general and social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary level by 2010; if so, the extent of coverage achieved so far;

(b) whether as much as 20 per cent of the primary schools in India are run with a single teacher; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the teacher-pupil ratio in primary schools now estimated at 1:41?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) One of the objectives of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is to bridge *inter alia*, social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010. The DISE data 2005 shows that social gaps have improved at primary level, as follows:-

Gross Enrolment Ratios (Class I-V)

	2003-04	2004-05
Overall	98.2	108.5
SC	88.3	116.05
ST	91.37	123.89

Source: SES

(b) As per DISE-2005, 12.71% of the primary schools were with a single teacher, largely due to a time lag between opening of new schools and recruitments of new teachers.

(c) Under SSA, 10.12 lakhs teachers have been sanctioned till 2006-07, for new schools opened and to improve teacher pupil ratios.